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NEW BOOKS REVIEWED

PUBLIC OPINION AND POPULAR GOVERNMENT. By A. LAWRENCE LOWELL, President of Harvard University. New York: Longmans, Green & Company, 1913.

This book of President Lowell's, which forms a part of the "American Citizen Series," may be described as, in a good sense, a glorified text-book—which is to say that its carefully considered method and scope, its economy of expression and proportion of treatment sharply distinguish it from all mere collections of essays or occasional addresses, while by virtue of its breadth of view and its graceful sincerity of style it rises clear out of the class of ordinary text-books or technical treatises. President Lowell is one of the few who can be subtly analytical without becoming pedantic, and his analysis of the terms "Public" and "Opinion" is something more than a discussion about words. With the resourcefulness of a skilled writer he develops and illustrates the conclusion that, "in order that opinion may be public a majority is not enough and unanimity is not required, but the opinion must be such that while the minority may not share it, they feel bound by conviction, not by fear, to accept it." There follows a pleasant and acute discussion of the reality or unreality of opinions, in which it is recognized that opinions adopted from others may be real if they form an integral part of the believer's philosophy, but otherwise the genuineness of an opinion depends upon personal judgment of the facts. The application of public opinion, therefore, has natural limits. "Even in the most firmly established democracies there are questions touching a chord of feeling so deep that the minority would not voluntarily submit to the decision of a majority." Nor can there be any true application of public opinion in cases where the essential facts are not accessible to the majority or not easily grasped by them.

One would not know where to look for a better brief discussion of the functions of parties than President Lowell has given in Part II. of his book. The correlation of this subject, with the general truths that we live in "an age of advertisement" and in an "age of brokerage," is striking and logically sound. In general, the author's view of party government, which is tolerant and many-sided, amounts to a moderate defense of the system. On the other hand, his attitude, as developed in Part IV., toward such devices as direct primaries, the initiative, the referendum and recall, is skeptical, although he repeatedly emphasizes the thought that no one argument or fact may be regarded as conclusive against them. "One panacea of promise in its day," he remarks, was representative government; another was universal suffrage; a third, the checks and balances

of the American constitutional system. The debasement of party government in the United States has been traced to the State and National nominating conventions which replaced the party caucuses in the legislatures and in Congress; but, in fact, the convention was adopted because the legislative caucus was thought undemocratic. Let us not be led astray by generalizations. Each institution has its limitations and will work well only within those limits."

As significant as any part of the book is the fourth and last division, which deals in chief with the employment of experts, administrative and other, in popular government. The lesson of European cities is taken to heart, and the frequently ignored fact is pointed out that examples of expert management controlled by representatives of the public are to be found throughout the political system of England. This part of the discussion flows with beautiful clearness from the theoretic consideration of public opinion as limited by the possibility of knowing the facts. Indeed, throughout the treatise the manner in which the author keeps within the formal limits of his titular theme and logically carries out its point of view constitutes a rare merit. But in this book one gets beyond theories and "idols of the tribe" to essential facts, both material and psychological. Everywhere there is evidence of that refined common-sense which absorbs and sifts special knowledge instead of being warped or overloaded by it—a gift which at its highest is possessed by few scholars. It is not too much to say that *Public Opinion and Popular Government* is worth every one's reading. The volume has statistical value as containing two appendices embodying what is said to be the most complete view of the practice of the initiative and referendum which has thus far been given.

OUR FRIEND JOHN BURROUGHS. By CLARA BARRUS. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914.

There is a good deal of John Burroughs's self in this book about him, although, perhaps, what it adds to the impression one gains from his writings is not greatly important. The discourse is just a bit idolatrous in tone, and may even awaken a slight sense of protest in the hearts of some of the less "tender-minded," who do not relish the flavor of a cult. Still, it is chatty and agreeably atmospheric, not too exclamatory or effusively appreciative. It is the kind of book in which one finds here and there interesting bits. There is, for instance, the story Mr. Burroughs told the author about his first sight of Emerson: "It was at West Point during the June examinations of the cadets. Emerson had been appointed by President Lincoln as one of the board of visitors. . . . I did not hear him speak, but watched him going about, with a silk hat, much too large, pushed back on his head; his sharp eyes peering into everything, curious about everything. 'Here,' said I to myself, 'is a countryman who has got away from home and intends to see all that is going on'—such an alert, interested air!" Walt Whitman, too, enters with familiar gusto. "He used to take Sunday breakfasts with us in Washington," said John Burroughs. "Mrs. Burroughs makes capital pancakes, and Walt was very fond of them; but he was always late to breakfast. The coffee would boil over, the griddle would smoke, car after car would go jingling by, and no Walt. Sometimes it got to be